

THE MAN WHO WON

By Mildred Caroline Goodridge.
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David Ross had received a heavy blow financially and to his affections as well. He was an odd, silent old fellow, but when an impulse swayed him he carried it to the full limit.

Thus he had done with the son of an old-time friend now dead—Vance Peters. Mr. Ross had formerly operated a little shop in Virden, given to



Elsa Watched His Mood Pitiingly.

the manufacture of hardware specialties. He took a fancy to young Peters and retired from the business in his favor. He still retained ownership of the business, but gave Peters full sway, asking only a monthly statement of the business.

One night the shop burned down and Vance Peters disappeared. Within twenty-four hours it was known that he had been embezzling money and making false returns to his bene-

factor. He had juggled the books and it was believed had fired the plant to destroy the evidences of fraud.

The day after the fire Mr. Ross sat at home gloomily immersed in thought. He had been fairly stunned by the revelations of the faithlessness of the young man he had trusted and benefited. His adopted daughter, Elsa, watched his mood pitiingly.

"Father," she spoke finally, "do not let this trouble distress you."

"If I had followed your advice I should have been better off," was the frank reply. "You never liked Vance, you believed that he was deceiving me, and you were right. I shall be chary of trusting my fellow man again. For one thing I am sincerely thankful! That is that I did not urge the wish of my heart that you and Vance should make a match of it."

Heart-free Elsa said nothing. She only regretted now that she had not repeated to the generous old man many evil rumors she had heard from time to time concerning his business manager.

"I find that Vance had little or no system in the business," Mr. Ross told Elsa. "He had a bookkeeper, an under manager and a traveling man. They were all here this morning to learn what the prospects were of the plant starting up again."

"Why, are you thinking of that, father?" asked Elsa in some surprise.

"Not only that, but as well of going back actively into the business," replied Mr. Ross. "I will be healthier and more contented by interesting myself in the business. Of course I shall want a manager. There's Rogers, the bookkeeper; Mahon, the traveling man. I want to test them out. I have invited them to come down to the house here and make it their home free of charge."

Elsa was not unused to the odd impulses of her adopted parent. She did not remark on his new freak, for she knew it would do no good.

"I've told the three of them that I will take care of them until we start